

Town of Garrett Park

Ordinance No.: 2011-05

Introduced: December 12, 2011

Adopted: _____

Effective Date: _____

WHEREAS, Article 23A, Section 2(a) of the Maryland Code, grants to the legislative body of every incorporated municipality in Maryland, including the Town of Garrett Park, general power to pass such ordinances not contrary to the Constitution of Maryland or public general law as they may deem necessary in order to assure the good government of the municipality, to protect and preserve the municipality's rights, property, and privileges, to preserve peace and good order, to secure persons and property from danger and destruction, and to protect the health, comfort and convenience of the citizens of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, Section 78-17 of the Charter of the Town of Garrett Park authorizes the Town Council to pass ordinances not contrary to the Constitution and laws of the State of Maryland or the Charter as it may deem necessary for the good government of the Town; for the protection and preservation of the Town's property, rights and privileges; for the preservation of peace and good order; for securing persons and property from violence, danger or destruction; for the protection and promotion of the health, safety, comfort, convenience, welfare, and happiness of the residents and visitors in the Town and for such other police or health matters as it may deem necessary; and

WHEREAS, Section 78-17(55) of the Charter of the Town of Garrett Park empowers the Town Council to regulate or restrict size of buildings and other structures, the percentage of lot occupancy, the size of yards, courts and other open spaces, location of buildings, structures, and land for residence or other purposes; and

WHEREAS, Article 28, Section 8-115.1 of the Maryland Code grants to municipal corporations in the Regional District in Montgomery County, such as the Town of Garrett Park, the authority to regulate, among other elements, the construction, repair, erection or remodeling of single family residential houses, buildings or other structures on land zoned for single family residential use, as it relates to, among other things, the location of structures on a property, including setback requirements, the dimensions of structures, including height, bulk, massing and design, and lot coverage, including impervious surfaces; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council established a Land Use Task Force to comprehensively review the Town's zoning regulations and to make recommendations for proposed amendments of Chapter 4 of the Town Code; and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Task Force conducted several public meetings to receive input from the public and to develop recommendations to the Town Council; and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Task Force issued a report and recommendations dated July 12, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that implementing some of the Land Use Task Force's recommendations would promote the public health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that the public health, safety and welfare would be promoted if the provisions of the Town Code are more consistent with the provisions of the Garrett Park Overlay Zone as set forth in Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code; and

WHEREAS, to comply with Article 28, Section 8-115.1 of the Maryland Code, on the 13th day of December, 2011, a copy of the following Ordinance was submitted to the Montgomery County Council for its comments; and

WHEREAS, no comments were received from the Montgomery County Council; and

WHEREAS, after proper notice to the public, and after at least thirty days from the date a copy of the following Ordinance was transmitted to the Montgomery County Council, the Town Council, in public session assembled on the ____ day of _____, 2012, conducted a public hearing at which it considered the following Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that amendment of Chapter 4 of the Town Code as hereinafter set forth is necessary for the good government of the Town; for the protection and preservation of the Town's property, rights and privileges; for the preservation of peace and good order; for securing persons and property from violence, danger or destruction; and for the protection and promotion of the health, safety, comfort, convenience, welfare, and happiness of the residents and visitors in the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Town Council of the Town of Garrett Park does hereby adopt the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 402 AND 403 OF THE GARRETT PARK TOWN CODE TO CLARIFY THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 402 OF THE TOWN CODE; TO ALLOW CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS FOR PROJECTIONS; TO AMEND CERTAIN SET BACK REQUIREMENTS; TO ADD A FLOOR AREA RATIO RESTRICTION TO SECTION 402; AND TO UPDATE THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 403

SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED AND ORDERED, this ____ day of _____, 2012, by the Town Council of the Town of Garrett Park, acting under and by virtue of the authority granted to it by Article 23A of the Maryland Code, Article 28, Section 8-115.1 of the Maryland Code, and the Town Charter, that Chapter 4 of the Town Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Section 402. Building Setback Lines, ~~and~~ Lot Coverage and Floor Area Ratio

(a) Purpose.

(1) To protect the public health, safety and welfare of the Citizens of Garrett Park and, more specifically, to: ~~{preserve and protect the lands and improvements within the Town by ensuring that all proposed new construction and alterations to buildings in the Town be compatible with the Town's existing scale, natural topography, vegetation, trees, physical setting, and density of development.}~~

(1.1) Preserve the unique park-like setting of the 19th century garden suburb, maintain the prevailing pattern of houses and open spaces, and retain the maximum amount of green area surrounding new or expanded houses.

(1.2) Encourage a compatible relationship between new or expanded houses and neighboring structures in scale, siting, and orientation on the lot.

(1.3) Maintain housing diversity and choice by retaining existing housing stock yet allowing a reasonable amount of expansion in living space.

(2) To establish stricter or additional building height, bulk, massing, design, location, setback and lot coverage requirements than those of the current Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance for the construction, repair, erection, or remodeling of houses, buildings, or other structures on land zoned for single-family residential use.

(3) To provide a procedure for a variance from the strict application of the building requirements contained in this section.

(b) Application and Interpretation. As provided in Article 28 of the Maryland Code, the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance applies to all property in Garrett Park. In addition, all buildings on land zoned for single-family residential use shall comply with the requirements of this Chapter 4 in effect at the time of the issuance of a Town building permit. If a term used in this Chapter is not defined herein, but is defined in the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, it shall have the meaning ascribed to it in the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance.

(b) (c) Setback, ~~and~~ Lot Coverage and Floor area Ratio Requirements. All buildings on land zoned for single-family residential use hereafter erected or altered shall adhere ~~{(except as provided in Section 403(d)) to the setback and lot coverage requirements of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance and definitions in effect at the time of the application for a building permit, and}~~ to the ~~{additional}~~ setback, ~~and~~ lot coverage and floor area ratio requirements set forth below:

(1) Setback from street. No main building or new construction shall be nearer to any street right-of-way than thirty (30) feet.

Additionally,

(1.1) If any adjacent lot is occupied by a main building with a front yard setback greater than this requirement, no main building hereafter erected or any addition to an existing main building shall project beyond the line previously established by the main buildings on the adjacent lots; or

(1.2) If only one adjacent lot is occupied by a main building with a front yard setback greater than this requirement, no main building hereafter erected or any addition to an existing main building shall project beyond a line established by the average of the front yard setback of the adjacent main building and thirty (30) feet.

(1.3) Notwithstanding the above, open porches added to structures existing as of ~~the effective date of this ordinance~~ **February 15, 2000** may extend up to eight (8) feet beyond the established or required front setback line.

(1.4) For the purposes of Section 402~~(b)~~ **(c)**(1)(1.1) and 402~~(b)~~ **(c)**(1)(1.2) of the Garrett Park Town Code, if the main building on an adjacent lot is set back by greater than 90 (ninety) feet, it shall be considered to be set back by 90 (ninety) feet.

(2) Setback from adjoining lot. No main building on land zoned for single-family residential use shall be nearer to any property line than the following:

(2.1) Sides: ~~{Each side setback shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet and the total of the two side setbacks shall be a minimum of forty (40) per cent of the lot width at the front of the main building line.}~~

(a) One side: 10 feet;

(b) Sum of both sides:

(i) 25 feet for lots with over 60 feet in width at the building line;

(ii) 20 feet for lots with 60 feet or less in width at the building line.

(2.2) Rear: ~~{The rear setback, from the rear main building line to the rear of the lot, shall be forty (40) feet for a lot one hundred (100) feet in depth, decreased for lots of smaller depth and increased for lots of greater depth by seventy (70) per cent~~

~~of the difference between the lot's average depth and one hundred (100) feet.}~~

(a) 25 feet for lots over 90 feet in depth;

(b) 15 feet for lots 90 feet or less in depth.

(3) Maximum lot coverage. The maximum percentage of the net lot area that may be covered by a main building is eighteen (18) per cent.

~~[(4) Adjustments of setback and lot coverage requirements.~~

~~(4.1) Where applicable, either of the following adjustments may be made in the required setback:~~

~~(4.1.1) If the total side setback requirement is more than twenty-five (25) feet for lots with over sixty (60) feet in width at the main front building line or twenty (20) feet for lots with sixty (60) feet or less in width at the main front building line, it may be reduced to not less than twenty-five (25) feet for lots with over sixty (60) feet in width at the main front building line or twenty (20) feet for lots with sixty (60) feet or less in width at the main front building line provided the resulting reduction in side yard areas is offset by an equivalent increase in the square footage of the rear and/or the front yard areas.~~

~~(4.1.2) If the rear setback requirement is more than twenty-five (25) feet for lots with over ninety (90) feet in depth or more than fifteen (15) feet for lots with ninety (90) feet or less in depth, it may be reduced to not less than twenty-five (25) feet for lots with over ninety (90) feet in depth or fifteen (15) feet for lots with ninety (90) feet or less in depth provided the resulting reduction in rear yard area is offset by an equivalent increase in the square footage of the side and/or the front yard areas.~~

~~(4.2) Building setback lines and lot coverage requirements shall be subject to adjustment under Section 403 (Variances) of this Code of Ordinances to the extent necessary to assure that a reasonable net lot area is available for the construction of any additions to the main and accessory buildings.}~~

(4) Floor Area Ratio. The maximum floor area ratio for main plus accessory buildings is .375.

(d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following exemptions for projections shall apply to the requirements of this Section 402.

(1) Open steps and stoops, exterior stairways and terraces may extend into any minimum front or rear yard not more than 9 feet.

(2) For side yards, open steps, stoops, exterior stairways, terraces, and porches may extend into any minimum side yard not more than 3 feet.

(3) Steps, stoops, exterior stairways and terraces that extend into the minimum required yards may be roofed but must not be enclosed. Any roof covering steps, stoops, exterior stairways, and terraces may extend not more than 3 feet into the minimum required yard.

(4) Any bay window, oriel, entrance, vestibule or balcony, 10 feet or less in width, may project not more than 3 feet into any minimum front or rear yard.

(5) Cornices and eaves may project 2 ½ feet or less over any yard, but such projection shall be not less than 2 feet from the vertical plane of any lot line.

(6) Sills, leaders, belt courses, and similar ornamental features may project not more than 6 inches over any yard.

(7) Fire escapes may project not more than 5 feet over any minimum yard.

(8) Outside stairways may project not more than 5 feet over a minimum rear yard only.

(9) Chimneys may project not more than 24 inches into any minimum front, rear, or side yard.

(10) Chimneys used as walls shall not be allowed to project into any minimum yard.

(11) Air conditioners and heat pumps may project not more than 5 feet into any minimum front or rear yard. Additional projection shall be permitted for the purpose of adding noise abatement devices. Any air conditioners or heat pumps existing within any minimum side yard prior to _____, may be continued and replaced.

* * *

Section 403. Variances

(a) Purpose. It is the purpose of this Section to provide a procedure for a variance from the strict application of these building requirements in specific cases where the unusual dimensions, shape, topography, or other exceptional characteristics of a particular lot are such

that the strict and literal enforcement of the Chapter would result in peculiar or unusual practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship on, the owner of the property.

(b) Procedure

(1) Application. An application for a variance shall be made to the Council on a form provided by the Council, shall be accompanied by such plans, drawings, photographs and other documents as may be required by the Council and shall set forth the Section of this Chapter under which the building permit was denied, the basis for the claim of need for relief and the nature and extent of the relief sought.

(2) Public Hearing. On each application for a variance a public hearing shall be held and a written opinion made public.

(c) Conditions upon which relief may be predicated

(1) No variance shall be granted unless the Council finds, on the basis of the evidence of record that good cause has been shown on the following grounds for relief from the strict application of the building requirements.

(1.1) Because of the unusual dimensions, shape, topography or other exceptional characteristics of the lot, the lot cannot accommodate the building sought to be erected if the ~~{setback or lot coverage}~~ requirements of Section 402 are strictly applied to the construction and the strict and literal application of Section 402 to the lot would result in peculiar or unusual practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship on, the owner of the property.

(1.1.1) The following conditions do not constitute hardship or difficulty as those terms are used herein:

1. Alleged violations of this Chapter by others;
2. The existence of nearby non-conforming uses;
3. The granting of a waiver or variance on other lots;
4. Any condition that results from the actions of the applicant; or
5. The existence of a building constructed in violation of this ~~{Section}~~ Chapter.

(1.1.2) If the alteration of the dwelling is required mainly as an aid to a disable resident and no other reasonable feasible alternative is available, then the practical difficulties standard of Section 403(c)(1.1) above shall be deemed to have been met.

(1.1.3) If the building(s) sought to be erected cover more than eighteen (18) per cent of the net lot area and if the net lot area is

equal to or less than 8,600 square feet then the exceptional characteristics standard of Section 403(c)(1.1) above shall be deemed to have been met.

(1.2) When considering an application for a variance, the Council must consider these criteria:

~~(1.2.1) the proposed new construction including existing structures and accessory buildings shall not exceed a floor area ratio (the ratio of floor area to lot area) of 0.375; and~~

(1.2.1) The net lot area to be covered by buildings, including accessory buildings, shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the net lot area, unless the lot area is equal to or less than 8,600 square feet. If the lot area is equal to or less than 8,600 square feet, then the net lot area to be covered by buildings, including accessory buildings, shall not exceed 1,720 square feet or 25 per cent of the net lot area, whichever is less. Net lot area is defined as the total horizontal area included within the rear, side and front lot lines; and

(1.2.2) whether [A] approval of the application for relief will be in harmony with the general purposes of this ~~[Ordinance]~~ Chapter and will not be contrary to the public interest.

(2) Specific Conditions. In granting a variance, the Council shall permit the least departure from the requirements of this Chapter that will give relief to the applicant. The Council may attach such conditions to the grant of variance, as it considers necessary to accomplish the intent of Sections 402 and 403 of this Code.

(d) Exemptions

(1) Existing Buildings. An existing building which was lawful when established, but which no longer conforms to the requirements of this Chapter because of the amendment of this Chapter, may continue as built and may be replaced or repaired, but may not be expanded, except to the extent that such expansion meets the requirements of this Chapter.

(2) Existing Building Permits. Construction for which a building permit was granted both by Montgomery County and by the Town before ~~[May 2, 1994]~~ _____, _____ may proceed under the regulations and conditions that prevailed when the permits were granted provided, however, that any such construction that does not comply with the provisions of this Chapter shall have begun within ~~[twenty-four (24) months of May 2, 1994.]~~ _____ months of _____.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND ORDERED, this ____ day of _____, 2012, by the Town Council of the Town of Garrett Park, acting under and by virtue of the authority granted to it by Articles 23A and 28 of the Maryland Code and the Town Charter, that:

(1) If any part or provision of this ordinance is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the part or provision held to be invalid shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any remaining part thereof; and

(2) This ordinance shall take effect on the ____ day of _____, 2012, or if a valid petition for a referendum as to this ordinance or any part hereof is filed pursuant to Section 78-15 of the Garrett Park Charter, this ordinance shall take effect upon approval of this ordinance, without any deletions, by the voters of Garrett Park.

ATTEST:

TOWN OF GARRETT PARK

Edwin Pratt, Jr., Clerk-Treasurer
Town of Garrett Park

Christopher Keller, Mayor
Town of Garrett Park

Bold and Underline indicates new material

~~Bold and Strikethrough~~ indicates material deleted

* * * indicates material unchanged